



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Goddard Space Flight Center

Inside Wallops

Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia

Volume XIX-97 Number 2 Feb. 18, 1997

NASA Budget Outlook Stable

Following the release of the 1998 budget, NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin was delighted to share with employees and the media his thoughts on the budget next year and beyond.

Goldin said, "The President put in place stable funding for the next five years....This stable funding shows the commitment this Administration has to science and technology."

The Fiscal Year 1998 budget request is for \$13.5 billion. Future years are: \$13.4 billion for 1999; \$13.2 billion for 2000 and beyond.

"Last year, the budget for 1997 was stable but the outyears were lower than we expected," Goldin said. "I told you then, I hoped we could do better. I'm happy to report we have. This budget will allow NASA to get on with the job of opening the air and space frontiers to enrich the lives of all Americans."

Wallops Aircraft Supporting Volcano Studies

NASA scientists are developing and using a variety of airborne and spaceborne remote-sensing tools to study potentially dangerous volcanoes that could one day threaten populated areas in the United States and around the world.

A number of domestic volcanoes are being studied, including Mount St. Helens and Mount Ranier in Washington; Mount Shasta and Lassen Peak in California; and Kilauea and Mauna Loa in Hawaii. Using information collected with the remote sensing tools, the scientists have created computer visualization products such as three-dimensional "flyover" video animation clips that help them study how the volcanoes are changing.

The GSFC Laser Altimeter Facility sensors are routinely flown aboard Wallops' aircraft such the P-3B and the T-39.

"By combining radar data with information from scanning laser altimeters, we are now tracking changes at the summits of Mount St. Helens and Mount Ranier that will document the impact of erosion, climate and other factors on the topography and stability of large volcanoes," said Jim Garvin (Code 921).

"We intend to work closely with Congress over the coming months. We believe they will also see the value of the work NASA is doing and the work we did to get here. We know NASA will continue to create missions that shape the future — and discoveries that rewrite the history books," he said.

Goddard Director Joe Rothenberg echoed the sentiments of the Administrator for what the budget means not only for NASA but for the Center as well. Goddard's portion of the 1998 budget is \$2.764 billion.

Rothenberg said, "NASA's FY98 budget is great news for the Agency and brings the promise of a bright future to Goddard. The Agency now has the prospect of a stable budget in a time of tough budget decisions. GSFC can feel good about what is ahead."

"These laser altimeters also have successfully measured the flank topography of volcanoes beneath their tree canopies. This is important because many of the most dangerous volcanoes are heavily vegetated, and the subtleties of their local relief must be known to accurately predict the path of their flows."



Monthly Morning Coffee Begins Feb. 19

Bring a cup and come join Arnold Torres and other senior staff members for a free cup of coffee from 8 to 8:30 a.m., February 19 at the cafeteria. All employees are invited to stop by, ask questions or discuss concerns with the Wallops senior staff.

The monthly coffee is a new program to expand communications with employees. They will be held at the same time on the third Wednesday of each month.

The coffee is furnished by Wallops Exchange and Morale Association.

Rockets Successful in Alaska

Two NASA Black Brant XII sounding rockets carrying plasma physics payloads were successfully flown Feb. 10 and 11 from the Poker Flat Research Range, AK.

The first payload, called the Physics of the Auroral Zone Electrons II (PHAZE II) flew to an altitude of 587 miles. PHAZE II was designed to examine the energization of waves and instabilities by the auroral electrons.

The payload instrumentation consisted of particle experiments supplied by the University of New Hampshire and wave experiments supplied by Cornell University and Dartmouth College. Roger Arnoldy from the Univ. of New Hampshire was the principal investigator. Dave Kotsifakis was the Wallops payload manager.

The second payload, called the Auroral Turbulence II, investigated the variations, in space and time, of the plasma physical properties occurring within and around a strong auroral arc. The payload flew to an altitude of 339 miles.

A combination of three fully instrumented diagnostic payloads were launched. The payload consisted of a mother (main payload), a daughter and baby sub-payloads. The principal investigator was Roy Torbert of the Univ. of New Hampshire. Cornell University also supplied instrumentation. Dave Wilcox was the Wallops payload manager.

Neither mission included payload recovery.

Agencies Uniting to Reduce Aircraft Accidents

In a response to a report from the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security, chaired by Vice President Gore, NASA, in partnership with the FAA, Department of Defense and the aviation industry, has been challenged to reduce aircraft accident rates five-fold within ten years.

To accomplish the goal, NASA is proposing to invest up to one-half billion dollars over the next five years. Funding will originate from reprogramming existing aeronautics funds, in addition to reassigning people and NASA facilities' work.

Weather Summary

by Ted Wilt, Senior Meteorologist

What a difference a year makes! Last year six inches of snow and very cold temperatures in January added to harsh winter weather totals.

This year only one inch of snow fell on January 9 and rapidly melted as the precipitation changed to rain during the morning. Average snowfall for the month is 3.2 inches and there were only 2.17 inches of rain which is just about an inch below normal.

January was mild with temperatures averaging nearly two degrees above normal. Golfers had a mid-winter chance to dust off their clubs on January 3 when a new record high of 68 degrees Fahrenheit was recorded and again the very next day when the temperature reached 65 degrees. The good news for folks paying heating bills was that no new record low temperatures were recorded.

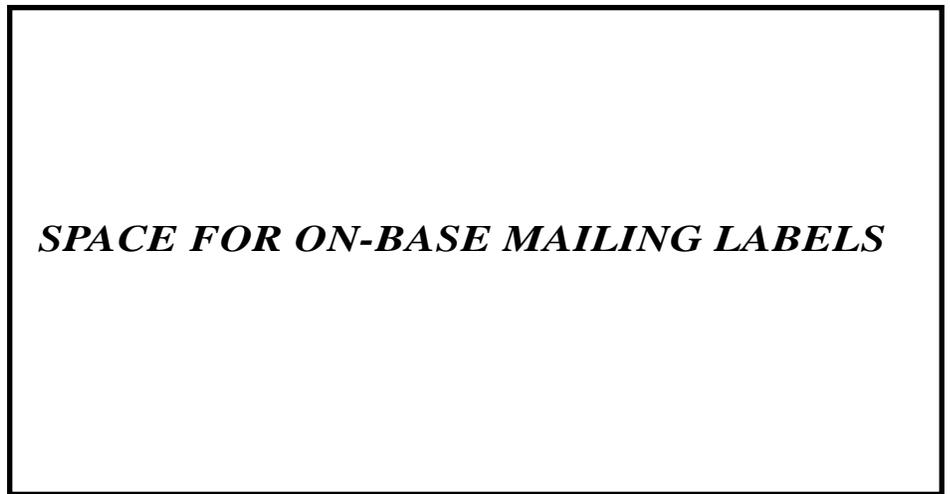
If January is an indication of things to come and if Punxsultawney Phil (one of the more reliable forecast sources) is correct, Spring should be just around the corner.

Temperatures for the first of March could have highs near 50 degrees and lows near the freezing mark. By the end of March highs should be close to 60 degrees and lows near 40 degrees. Snowfall averages one inch during March. The storm of the century hit the mid-Atlantic coast in March 1993 and average rainfall is almost four inches. March is second only to August as one of the wettest months, so don't retire the umbrella just yet.

Jack Gum Retirees Effective January 31



After 21 years of government service, Jack Gum retired as an engineering technician. Following four years in the U.S. Air Force, Gum was employed as a machinist by Joule Corporation at Wallops in 1974. He was transferred to NASA Wallops in 1979. Gum plans to complete remodeling his home and spending more time with his church and the "Promise Keepers".



SPACE FOR ON-BASE MAILING LABELS

Retirees Effective Feb. 3, 1997



Walter E. Melson, Jr.

Having earned a Master's, aerospace engineering, Walter (Ed) Melson, Jr. accepted a position with NASA Wallops as an aerospace engineer in Range Safety in 1965. Among other projects during 33 years of government service, Melson conducted research on the effects of heavy rain on the aerodynamics of aircraft wings. He retired as head of project support in the Aircraft Programs Branch. Melson hopes to spend retirement using more of his time fishing.



Ben Robbins

In June 1965, Ben Robbins, began his government career with NOAA as a rawinsonde upper air supervisor. Robbins earned a Bachelor of Science, geography, from Salisbury State College. He transferred to NASA Wallops in 1979 as a meteorological data reduction specialist and remained in that position until he retired. During his years at Wallops, Robbins received group awards for several rocket campaigns and the Equal Employment Opportunity award. Robbins plans to devote more time to various community organizations and his church. He and his wife, Esther, hope to do some traveling.

June B. Marshall, Printing Management Office, also retired effective Feb. 3, 1997.



Hartwell Taylor, Jr.

After graduation from Virginia Tech in 1958 with a Bachelor of Science, electrical engineering, Hartwell Taylor, Jr. began his government career with NASA Wallops. Taylor accepted a position as an electrical engineer in 1962. He retired as a group leader in the Electrical Systems Group. Taylor intends to do more woodworking and spend as much time as possible with his grandchildren.

ENGINEERS TURNING IDEAS INTO REALITY.....

NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK
FEBRUARY 16-22, 1997

Inside Wallops is an official publication of Goddard Space Flight Center and is published by the Wallops Office of Public Affairs, Extension 1584 or 1579, in the interest of Wallops employees

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Printing	Printing Management Office